



## Queensland Beekeepers' Association

### Weekly Varroa Mite Update – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

The detection of *Varroa destructor* in Newcastle on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 has created much anxiety within the Australian beekeeping industry. In an effort to streamline our communications to our members the QBA will now offer weekly updates to our members and affiliate clubs giving insight into our current areas of focus.

### Update 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

#### Bee 123 data to date:

Total beekeepers reporting results	1087
Total Hives checked	19053
Total hives reported	88908
Total No. of Recreational Beekeeper Surveys:	524
Total No. of Commercial Beekeeper Surveys:	558
<b>Mites found or suspected</b>	<b>0</b>

## Biosecurity Queensland and QBA fortnightly update 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

### QBA Weekly Update – 1/09/2023

- As of 29<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the total numbers of IP's are at 231
- There are new detections at Newcastle, Singleton and Kempsey, resulting in extensions to Eradication Emergency Zones (EEZ) surrounding the infested premises. Tracing on these detections is continuing.
- There are new detections within pollination sites at Euston, Euroley, Nericon and Balranald, NSW
- A 0-10 kilometre Eradication Emergency Zone (EEZ) and a 10-25 kilometre Surveillance Emergency Zone (SEZ) are in place around the varroa mite detections at Balranald and Euston, NSW. Part of these zones extend into Victoria.
- The decision to allow the removal of the hives from the region is to ensure swarming and robbing behaviours are minimised as the almond season closes and pollination food sources diminish.
- Restrictions are in place if you are moving bees and hives to prevent the spread of varroa mite to Queensland
- You must hold a [biosecurity instrument permit](#) issued by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries to move bees, beehives, used beekeeping equipment or bee products (including unprocessed honey) into Queensland if you are a:
  - Queensland beekeeper who has been in the Victorian Surveillance Emergency Zone since 1 July 2023.
  - beekeeper coming into Queensland from states or territories where varroa mite has been found.
- The VMPPP continues to undertake prevention and preparedness activities under business continuity plans.
- The VMPPP is undertaking an audit of biosecurity instrument permits issued since 21 April 2023 and undertaking compliance checks against Bee 123 submissions. All beekeepers who have been issued a permit since that time are being contacted to ensure permit conditions have been met.

- The CCEPP continues to meet regularly to consider the current state of the response and ongoing response strategy for varroa mite.
- A communication and engagement campaign will start from Sunday 2 October. The 'Spring Blitz' campaign will be run on radio, social media and digital display ads.
  - The campaign will build awareness and encourage beekeepers to undertake hive checks and report to Bee 123, even if they do not find any suspect mites. The aim is to reach 15,000 hive checks to support Queensland's claim of area freedom for varroa mites.
  - The radio ads will be played in radio stations in South East Queensland, Wide Bay, Toowoomba, Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton regions.
  - The digital display ads will be shown on websites and online articles, using targeting options to reach the beekeeping audience.
  - Targeted social media advertising will run concurrently to ensure a coordinated approach and broader reach to beekeeping audiences across Queensland.
- VMPPP staff attended the Valley Bee Open Day in Gympie on Saturday 26 August.

### Queensland hives

- Queensland remains free of varroa mite
- The whole of the state of Queensland is a Varroa mite biosecurity zone, regulating the movement of any Varroa mite carrier into Queensland from a state or territory where Varroa mite has been detected.
- As no detections have been made in Victoria, on 30 Aug 2023, a [Movement Control Order](#) (MCO) was placed on the beekeepers who had provided pollination services to the almond industry. Due to their proximity to detections in Sunraysia and Riverina, they were placed in a surveillance zone by Victoria.
- Queensland beekeepers who have been in the Victorian SEZ since 1 July 2023 must hold a [permit](#) issued by the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) to move into Queensland. This applies to bees, beehives, used beekeeping equipment, or bee products (including unprocessed honey).
- Biosecurity Queensland case managers will be assigned to every returning beekeeper to ensure all permit conditions are known and understood, and compliance activities will be undertaken to ensure the permit conditions are met.
- Penalties apply to beekeepers who do not meet their obligations under the Biosecurity Act 2014.

### NSW hives

- Following the detection of Varroa within pollination sites at Euston, Euroley, Nericon and Balranald, NSW DPI has completed a risk assessment relating to the movement of hives from the Surveillance Emergency (purple) Zones (SEZ) surrounding these areas to mitigate the potential biosecurity risk associated with rapidly declining floral resources and potential robbing behaviour.
- Beekeepers located in purple zones at Euston, Euroley, Nericon and Balranald may move their hives to a location in the General Emergency (blue) Zone (GEZ) of NSW under strict conditions.
- Find out more <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/emergencies/biosecurity/current-situation/varroa-mite-emergency-response>

### Victorian hives

- Varroa mite has not been found in Victoria.
- New permits from Agriculture Victoria will allow beekeepers in Victoria and within the Varroa Surveillance Emergency Zones (SEZ) to move their hives and equipment.
- The permits require beekeepers to inform Agriculture Victoria where their hives are in the zone and where they will be moved to. This is done through an online application form. Beekeepers must continue to report their movements as stated within the permit conditions.
- Beekeepers must also complete alcohol wash testing on their hives at permitted rates within seven days of moving the hives. Results must be reported to Agriculture Victoria.
- The SEZs were established following varroa mite detections at Euston and Balranald in NSW.
- Find out more <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/pest-insects-and-mites/priority-pest-insects-and-mites/varroa-mite-of-honey-bees/varroa-mite-current-situation>

## Permit condition compliance inspections

The Varroa Mite Prevention and Preparedness Program (VMPPP) continues to manage ongoing permitting and compliance requirements for the movement of bees and related varroa mite carriers into Queensland. The VMPPP includes two dedicated Senior Biosecurity Officers whose operational duties encompass surveillance and compliance activities, as well as a dedicated Permitting Officer to oversee bee-related movement applications.

## Communications

- Additional communication material is being prepared to encourage beekeepers to check their hives and report to Bee 123:
- DAF continues to meet with the QBA and industry partners fortnightly to discuss progress with prevention activities to support keeping Queensland free of varroa mite.

## Bee 123 QLD Surveillance Dashboard Map 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

The map below illustrates the current distribution of varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal. The QBA and DAF urge all beekeepers across Queensland to complete varroa mite surveillance activities immediately and report their results (including negative results) to the portal.

The blue dots represent negative surveillance results from **1087** varroa mite surveillance activities reported to the Bee 123 portal since the 13<sup>th</sup> of July 2022.

Please see the page below to review the current distribution of varroa mite surveillance reports as collated from data collected from the Bee 123 portal.

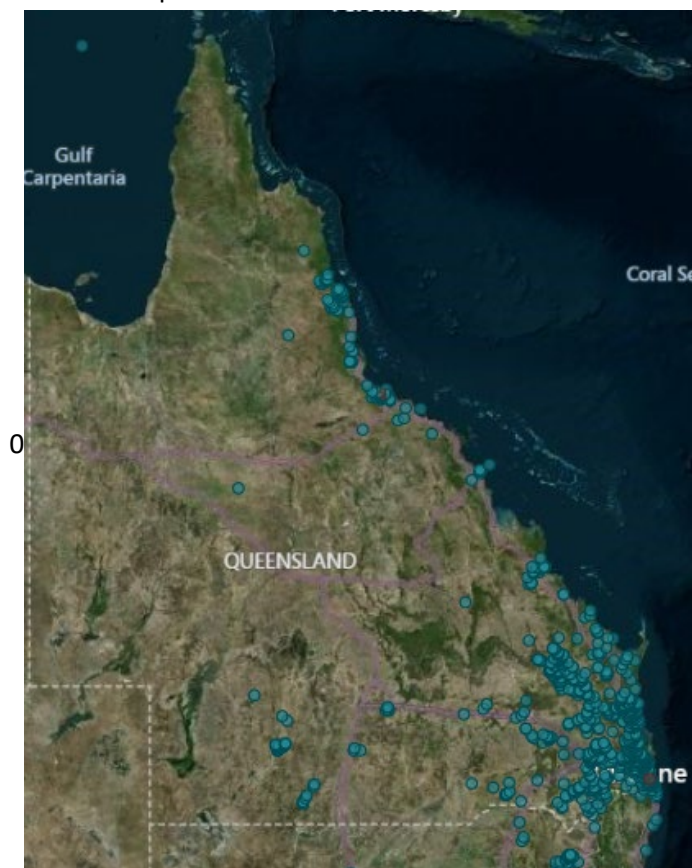


Figure 1 - Bee 123 Surveillance Reports – 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

**Video Resources:**

The QBA now have a dedicated YouTube channels with multiple playlists offering a dynamic range of subject matter relevant to beekeeping in Queensland. We encourage all members to explore our online video library and recommend members regularly visit our YouTube channel to discover new content from time to time.

If you'd like to visit our YouTube channel, click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/@queenslandbeekeepersassoc>

**QBA Membership:**

The Queensland Beekeepers' Association warmly welcome new members to our organisation. To complete an application for membership please visit <https://members.qbabees.org.au/join-us/>

When completing your application, please nominate your preferred branch of the QBA.

**Useful Information Links:**

QBA Varroa mite portal - <https://members.qbabees.org.au/QBA-Varroa-Mite-Portal>

DAF Engagement Hub - <https://daf.engagementhub.com.au/varroa-mite>

NSW DPI - <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/emergencies/biosecurity/current-situation/varroa-mite-emergency-response>

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